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ANALYSES,

8c.

- I.—*Journal of a Voyage on the Bahr-Abiad or White Nile, with some general Notes on that River, and some Remarks on the District of Atbara, made in a Tour from Hartoum.* Translated and partially abridged from a Report addressed by M. Adolphe Linant to W. M. Leake, Esq., Secretary of the Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa.

1. *Voyage on the Bahr-Abiad.*

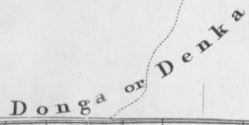
M. LINANT commences his narrative thus :—

‘ I remained several days at the junction of the Bahr-Abiad with the Blue river, in order to determine the position. By the mean of my astronomical observations, a small island, placed just at the fork, is in $15^{\circ} 34'$ north latitude, and $32^{\circ} 30' 58''$ east longitude from Greenwich. I then was obliged to wait a little longer for a fair wind to carry me up against the stream, the weather being quite calm till the 5th of April, 1827 ; when, at sunrise, although still calm, the clouds began to rise from the north, and about ten o'clock a strong gale arose, with rain. We immediately weighed anchor and proceeded ; but unluckily the dust, raised by the wind, completely obscured the banks of the river on both sides.

‘ We ascended the river at a great rate, the current being very slight against us ; and the waves rose astern as in a wide sea. I sounded occasionally, and found always from three to four fathoms. The river, in many places, was a mile and half wide, and even then was far within its regular banks, which sometimes seemed above four miles distant one from another, and were distinctly marked beyond a wide sandy beach without any appearance of verdure ; but even this is not the full width at the greatest height, as the river then overflows the adjoining country to a considerable extent, especially to the west, the eastern bank being the higher, although on both sides the general aspect is flat. The farther banks are covered with wood, on the eastern side, of stunted growth, rooted chiefly in sand ; on the western, of larger size, and growing in a better soil. On the borders of the river were an almost innumerable quantity of wild geese, pelicans, swans, &c.

English Miles 69 12 = One Degree

SALEY, WADAY, OR BORGOD



‘Proceeding with a fresh and fair wind, with little current against us, we made great progress; and, about one in the afternoon, passed a mountain named Aoulle, on the eastern bank, situated close to the river, and covered with trees and herbage. Its basis is red granite, but not of very good quality, and extending in a direction from S.E. to N.: some portion of its prolongation can be traced both in the bed of the river, and, beyond it, in the northern quarter.

‘Shortly after leaving Aoulle, we were enabled to render some little service to the inhabitants; for, passing a place called Merkerdar, where some Arabs were encamped, we saw one of their boats sink in the middle of the stream; and although the men seemed to swim well, and the women with their children made an attempt to do the same, yet a crowd gathered instantly on the adjoining bank, and much interest and alarm were excited. I immediately shortened sail and sent my little boat to assist, by which means the whole were brought ashore, and even the cattle and furniture were, for the most part, saved. Luckily, during the whole confusion not a single crocodile appeared: in general they are very ravenous.

‘Wherever we passed, during the whole day, the country appeared more densely peopled, and there seemed to be a greater abundance of horses and cattle than below the junction of the river; but we did not observe a single permanent village, except in one place where there were some straw huts, and where the inhabitants, when we passed, were busily engaged in fishing. The men, two and two, holding a small net, enclosed a space between them as with a seine, and, drawing it on shore, brought in a few fish, a much greater number probably escaping between each little net. The women, children, and aged, stood on the banks, and collected the fish as brought on shore.

‘About half past five o’clock we stopped for the night at a place where some Arabs were encamped, opposite a mountain called Guebel Tinné, so named because at its foot there is a wide extent of country periodically covered by the inundations of the river, but which, on its retreat, is of great fertility, and is thus regularly cultivated. This mountain is on the western bank of the river, and about seven miles distant from it. We found the Arabs to be of the tribe of Husseinades; their camp was agreeably placed under some fine trees, separated from the river by a hillock of sand, covered with bushes, and their huts were made of straw and woollen stuff. Their Sheikh, whose name was Moussa, was not with them, but his son did the honours in his stead, and came to see me, with many of his comrades, bringing a sheep as a present. He was a remarkably fine-looking man, as were, indeed, the whole party with him; and all seemed well-disposed;

Fahrenheit's thermometer was this day 107° in the afternoon, 90° at night.

' *April 6.*—We passed the night very quietly, having made fast to the bank near the Arabs ; and, in the morning, again made sail with the same wind as before. The cold at this time was sufficiently sharp. In general I thought that the eastern shore was somewhat lower, and the river narrower, here than before. Towards evening we observed a little island covered with high trees, and both banks were also richly wooded, with a fine verdure quite to the water's edge. To this point, accordingly, the Turkish government frequently sends to cut down wood for useful purposes, especially boat-building ; and the view in passing is most beautiful.

' We arrived, towards evening, at Wed Shelayeh, where resides the Sheikh Mohammed Wed Shelayeh, who gives his name to this place, and is chief of the Hassanieh Arabs. I had a letter for him from the governor of the province, and sent accordingly in quest of him ; but both he and the Caymacan (second in authority) were gone to a village at some distance to obtain payment of its contributions, and were not to return till the following day.

' *April 7.*—The Caymacan arrived this morning, and I sent immediately my cawas, (Turkish attendant,) to beg that he would press the return of the chief, whom I much wished to see, in hopes that he would send one of his people to guide me in my further progress, if, indeed, he did not himself accompany me. In the meantime I crossed over to the other side of the river to shoot, and found the whole country covered with fine trees and plants, and abounding in monkeys, birds of various kinds, and antelopes.

' In the afternoon, seeing my cawas on the opposite bank of the river, and the Caymacan with him, I re-crossed, and learnt that the Sheikh would certainly arrive that night. The Caymacan supposed that the Sangiac (Turkish governor) of Hartoum was arrived, having received that report from a man who had mistaken my boat, followed as it was by two others coming to load wood, for that of the governor. The Caymacan, nevertheless, was very civil, and sent me several sheep.

' *April 8.*—In the morning Sheikh Mohammed Wed Shelayeh arrived, also expecting to see the Sangiac ; I sent him immediately the letter which I had brought for him. It gave him great uneasiness, as it ordered him to accompany me as far as the country of the Shiloukhs, with whom he was at the very moment at war. It is true that, being occupied in levying contributions for the government, he thought he might, on this plea, dispense with going himself ; but there was almost equal difficulty in determining whom he should send in his stead. He visited me,

when I found him a mere savage, without manner, and saying little, except to complain that I should think of going among the Shiloukhs without an army, assuring me that I should be murdered by them, with all my attendants ;—to which one of his suite added, that news had been just received that the Shiloukhs were even preparing to descend the river and attack the tribe of Hassanieh. I replied, that this news was certainly false,—that the very same story had been told to another officer lately arrived at Wed Shelayeh ;—that I saw the object was to induce the whites to leave the country altogether ; but that I was determined to proceed, at least, to Sheikh Nimmer, who held the frontier between Hassanieh and the Shiloukhs, whence I should send a messenger forward to announce my arrival to the king of the Shiloukhs, and to obtain a safe-conduct from him ; I should thus only want a relation of Sheikh Mohammed's to accompany me as far as to Sheikh Nimmer's encampment. They appeared much surprised at this reply, but readily assented, not at all suspecting my real intention, which was to proceed, if possible, at all risks ; and I am persuaded that without this deception I should not have procured a guide here at all.

‘ Indeed I was in some doubt even myself what to do, and sometimes thought of merely acting as I said ; while, at other moments, I conceived that if I could meet with a fair wind from the north, it would be best to go right through the country of the Shiloukhs, to where their king resided,—in which way I might have little to fear, there being eleven persons in the boat, well armed ; for I was told that the country of the Shiloukhs was only six days' sail in length, and that above them the natives were much less ferocious. But in adopting this course two things were to be apprehended : my men might revolt,—or I might meet with some part of the river too shallow to float my boat, in which case, with little or no current to assist me, and a contrary wind, it might be difficult to return. And it would be still more difficult to advance by land, in consequence of the enmity of the inhabitants : besides which it was important that I should *sail* past the country of the Shiloukhs, in order to be certain whether there was or was not a fork of the river about this point, which many circumstances led me to think probable. Ultimately I resolved to continue advancing, as I might be best able, by the river, obtaining information and maturing my projects as I proceeded.

‘ *April 9.*—In the morning I went to call on the Sheikh, who received me well, and gave my party plenty of merisa and bulbul* to drink, which they accepted willingly ; but I was unable to extract any further information, the Sheikh being an absolute brute,

* [Liquors of different degrees of strength, fermented from a mixture of Doura bread and water.—See *Burchhardt's Nubia*, p. 218.]

and his people not less stupid and ignorant. I asked, also, if they had any Shiloukh slave among them who might serve me as an interpreter, and also, in some degree, a hostage for my safety, but could find none.

‘*April 10.*—As they were all occupied with their contributions, and would talk of nothing else, I crossed the river to shoot in the woods, which there skirted the water. I tried to catch some monkeys in a way very common here, by intoxicating them; but they were too cunning, and only tasted the liquor set out for them by dipping the tips of their fingers in it. I was more successful with birds, and shot a considerable number, which I afterwards endeavoured to preserve; but the ants got to them, to my great regret, as many were very interesting.

‘*April 11.*—I sent to tell the Sheikh that I should set off positively the next day, and that he must therefore send me one of his relations early to accompany me. I preferred approaching the Shiloukhs, at all hazards, to remaining at Wed Shelayeh, where I learned nothing new concerning them.

‘*April 12.*—In the morning Sheikh Mohammed sent me one of his relations, as directed, avowedly only to accompany me to the last encampment of the Hassanieh, under Sheikh Nimmer. But I was determined to carry him farther if I saw occasion; and on the score of deception we were on equal terms, as he began, even in the very beginning, with telling me the grossest lies with the most unblushing assurance.

‘The wind was fresh and fair, and we proceeded at a great rate. The river was not quite so wide as before, but the banks, which were covered with large trees, were somewhat higher, and the inundated country, consequently, was of less extent. In the course of the day, in approaching the shore, a hippopotamus, which was in the water, alarmed by the approach of the boat, landed and trotted away, opening and shutting his mouth. Having thus marched about one hundred and fifty paces, he returned to the river. About three in the afternoon we arrived at Mettattanna, where a passage-boat is kept for the use of the caravans between Sennâr, Wed Medinet, and Cordafan. A number of Gelabes were passing at the time, to whom I stopped to speak. They were of the tribe of Cubabish, actually in revolt against the Pasha, and were consequently so much afraid of us that, had not their merchandize been all unloaded and scattered about the beach, they would have fled. I learned from them that Sheikh Nimmer, who formerly had his camp considerably higher, was then at no great distance, a circumstance of which our guide immediately availed himself to assure us that the Shiloukhs had driven him from his former encampment. We were then on the eastern side of the river, and I was preparing to cross to look for

him when he arrived. He had seen our boat, and came over in a passage-boat to visit me, but first demanded the *Aman*, or assurance of safety, which I immediately granted. He is an old man, respectable in his appearance, but filthy, stinking, and disgusting on a near approach. I spoke to him of my proposed voyage, on which he made nearly the same representations as the people of Wed Shelayeh, but, nevertheless, almost agreed to accompany me. We re-crossed the river together, and he left us, promising to send us a sheep.

‘I was undecided what to do, fearing that if I advanced too far without intimating my arrival to the Shiloukhs, and they took umbrage at this, I might find it almost impossible to return, my boat being heavy, the winds contrary, and the current almost none. The Cubabish, meanwhile, departed with their caravan; and shortly afterwards I saw one of my servants, on the bank of the river, speaking to a man of the country, tolerably well dressed, for he had a shirt (which is not very common), with good arms, and an ass well saddled. I called to my servant to ask who this was, and he answered that he was a faquir, or fanatic, of Sennâr, named Mohammed, who knew me well. This excited my curiosity, and I sent for him. He said that he had been several times among the Shiloukhs when going to Cordafan; and that, with little danger, I might go as far as Aleis, below which I should scarcely see any of that people. He added, that he was himself arranging his tribute with Nimmer; and as I thus became interested about him, I lent him the weight of my recommendation, and soon settled his composition.

‘The Sheikh, however, when I spoke of setting off the very next day for Aleis, started many more difficulties than in the morning; and the relation of Sheikh Mohammed told me expressly that he would not accompany me. I threatened and encouraged them both by turns, but in vain; and in the evening I anchored in the middle of the river, the wind being at east, and consequently the boat being in complete safety. The hippopotami were in great numbers all round us, and apparently much enraged at seeing our boat, as were certainly all the Arabs in the neighbourhood, the Turkish boats never ascending above Wed Shelayeh.

‘*April 13.*—In the morning I sent for Sheikh Nimmer, who did not, however, arrive till mid-day. I also kept Mohammed’s relation on board under different pretexts, and the faquir of Sennâr, who had agreed the evening before to accompany me. When I had thus got them all on board in the middle of the stream, I asked Sheikh Nimmer if he would now go with me; on which he renewed his representations, enforced by Mohammed’s relation. I then asked their last word, which being a refusal, I told them, that since this was the case, I would take them by

force, and immediately made sail. Nimmer now changed his tone, and said, that for going merely to Aleis there might not, probably, be much danger, provided the Shiloukhs were not previously informed of our voyage, and did not, in consequence, assemble a considerable force there to attack us. He also confessed another thing, which he had always before denied, viz. that he had often made incursions into the country of the Shiloukhs, and knew it well. His people, when they saw me depart, assembled on the bank of the river, and appeared uneasy; but he called to them not to be alarmed, for that he was quite well; and they then dispersed.

‘ At a little distance above Metta-tanna we saw the last Arabs of the tribe Hassanieh, at a place called Madannelkell. They were in great number, encamped on the bank of the river, under some very fine trees; and had also, on the western side, opposite their encampment, a portion of country under cultivation, bearing kidney-beans and doura. Sheikh Nimmer told me that we should not now meet with any one until we saw the Shiloukhs, excepting at another place, about a league higher, where the Hassanieh have a salt work; and, perhaps, on the western bank some Cubbabish, coming to the river to water their flocks and renew their own stock, which they generally do every five days.

‘ We had but little wind the greater part of the day; but passed several islands covered with large trees of a splendid green. The country had changed very much its aspect. Nature was without ornament, but, as it were, more majestic in the absence of man; the river was wider, and its banks were covered with larger trees, which were no longer obstructed with brush-wood, but stood in groves, amidst a rich herbage of the finest hue, as in an English park. Towards evening we saw numerous herds of antelopes and wild cattle come to the river to drink; quantities of rare birds were seen on all sides, and the water swarmed with crocodiles and hippopotami. At night we were obliged to stop abreast the island of Shebeshi, which is covered with wood, but anchored in the middle of the stream for safety, and to pass the night in repose.

‘ I had now arranged the following plan in my own mind. I thought if the wind favoured me ever so little that I should reach some place where I would find Shiloukhs, before the news of my arrival could reach them; for by proceeding during the night I could easily gain such a point the following evening; whereas, according to our calculation, the intelligence by land could not arrive before the night after. I might thus surprise some Shiloukhs, either on one of the islands, where they frequently gather honey and chase hippopotami; or at Aleis itself, where they have a permanent encampment. I could then give their boat to the three men I had with me, with which they might return if

they did not choose to accompany me farther ; while under the guidance of the Shiloukhs themselves, I should proceed as rapidly as possible to where their king resides, which is six days' journey above the frontiers, at a place called Damab. In placing myself under his protection I knew well that I should run little or no risk, as far as my life was concerned, for they respect more, perhaps, than their neighbours the laws of hospitality, excepting only near the frontiers, where they are all great robbers, and where, besides, I had to fear that they might take me for a Turk intending to levy a contribution on them, and might thus persist in attacking me, in spite of every representation. I told no one in the boat my project, excepting only my Turkish soldier, who was much alarmed, but did not venture to disclose it.

' During the night a little wind having risen, we set sail, and proceeded a little farther ; but it soon again fell calm and obliged us to anchor.

' *April 14.*—At day-break we had again a little breeze, and got as far as the island of Obeiha. The wind then suddenly turned to south, and blew with considerable force, which the more discouraged me, as I saw that it would continue to last that day and night. We landed on the island in search of honey, and to shoot a few birds, and found it covered with fine trees, long and straight, without underwood, with the intervening surface thickly set with herbaceous plants, and strewed with the feathers of birds, which were in the trees by thousands—among them were many small green parrots. We easily found two hives in the trunks of the trees, but the bees being still in them, we could not take the honey. It is this honey and the chase of hippopotami which alone bring the Shiloukhs to this desert part of the river, which is above two days' journey in length.

' In the afternoon, the wind having abated, but still hanging to the south, I weighed, and endeavoured to proceed with the oars, but the boat was so heavy that it was with difficulty we reached the island of Douhem against both wind and current ; we there anchored again in the middle of the stream, for greater security. About two hours after dark, heavy clouds, with lightning, appeared to the southward, and we prepared for a tempest, which, in fact, reached us about midnight ; but, though the wind was high, there was luckily no rain. All night long we heard a roaring to the west, which I supposed to be that of lions, and the howling of hyenas to the east.

' *April 15.*—We set off early in the morning, the wind still light and variable. We thus saw the whole length of the island of Douhem, which is considerable, and which, as well as both banks of the river, are covered with high trees. Sheikh Nimmer assured me that he saw two men on the island among the trees, but I could

not perceive them even with my glass ; nevertheless, as it was of great importance to ascertain the fact, I landed with four men well armed, but still was unable to find any traces of them. The wind now sprung up strong from the north, on which we made sail, and about mid-day arrived at the island of Hassanieh, which is large, and covered with wood. It was there that Sheikh Nimmer had made me hope certainly to find Shiloukhs, but we saw neither men nor their boats, the absence of which last was a certain sign that the others were also away, as these natives never stir without their boats. We did discover, however, some remains of fires which appeared recent ; and, continuing our journey, but with less wind, arrived in the evening at the north point of the island of Merhada. I regretted exceedingly not having had a better wind, as now there was scarcely a doubt that the Shiloukhs knew of our approach, and we therefore kept a stout watch through the night, which was calm. Shortly after dark, while casting our eyes in every direction, and listening to the sounds of the hippopotami and lions, I saw a light, as it appeared to me, on the island ; and showing it to Sheikh Nimmer, who assured me that it was certainly a party of the Shiloukhs, I proposed to him to start before day, in order to catch them. The Sheikh, on the contrary, said that it would be much better to return at once, as probably it was a strong party come down to oppose us ; upon which one of my sailors remarked, that it was well proposed, as the crew would not proceed farther. I had been in expectation of such an event, and was prepared to act accordingly. I represented to the boatman that I had not taken the crew by force—that they had long known that I was going among the Shiloukhs—that they ought, therefore, to have spoken sooner, and that now it was no longer time. Then, rushing to my cabin, I seized a pistol, and placing it in my girdle, I threatened to shoot the first man I should hear disputing my orders instead of obeying them. The Reis and the other sailors on this awoke, blamed the men who had occasioned the disturbance, and swore to follow wherever I chose to lead ; on which I revealed my project, and, although much alarmed, they offered no opposition. The Sheikh Nimmer and the relation of Sheikh Mohammed were especially embarrassed, because, having no boat, they could not return by water, and were afraid to venture by land. As to the Fakir Mohammed, he was determined to accompany me. I wished to set off immediately, but the want of wind prevented me. The fires of the Shiloukhs continued burning till daylight.

April 16.—A little before daylight a slight air sprung up in our favour, and we immediately made sail ; but there was not enough to carry us to the place where the fires had been burning till broad daylight, and then, to my great dissatisfaction, I saw the

Shiloukhs already embarked, and making off as fast as they could. With a little more wind we might soon have caught them ; but, as it was, we traversed nearly the whole length of the island of Merhada before, on doubling a little cape, we found ourselves tolerably near their boats, in each of which were three persons. These, as we approached, leapt out of their boats into the water, armed as they were, with lance and sabre, and swam to the eastern shore. I did all I could by signs to engage them to remain, and open an intercourse with us, but they only halted a moment on the beach, as if to look at us, and, the instant we approached, retired into the woods uttering loud cries. I then examined their boats, in which they had left nothing except a skin filled with honey in the comb, which I had a great mind to keep ; but, on reflection, I left it ; and putting in each boat a mat, a piece of coarse linen cloth, and a little salt, all which things would, I knew, be agreeable to them, I hauled them up dry on the island, and left them.

‘ We then continued our route for Aleis ; but, before making the end of the island, saw other two boats on the eastern bank, of which the crews had, in like manner, fled. About three o’clock in the afternoon we arrived at Aleis. There the river was narrower, the banks were less thickly wooded, and the timber was of a much inferior quality, being chiefly brushwood. Seeing a great many people assembled on the western shore, and being satisfied that they were not Shiloukhs, we approached them ;—it was easy to see the difference, the Shiloukhs going always naked, while these were clothed. They were in no degree alarmed at our approach ; but, on the contrary, came to meet us. I anchored in the middle of the stream, and sent my little boat to communicate with them, and invite their chief to visit me, which he agreed to do immediately. He was an old man, named Idris, clean, and of good mien ; after having saluted us, and taken coffee, he told me that he and his party were Gelabes of Dar Sille, that they came from Darfur, and were proceeding, in the course of their trade, to Sennâr. They had arrived on the banks of the river the evening before, and a party of Shiloukhs were actually engaged in ferrying them across when the news arrived that an expedition of Turks was coming to attack them. The Shiloukhs had then retired, and were assembling in force at an island higher up, called Helle-tell-Kedawieh, having sent for reinforcements to another island called Aba. The old man added, that he and his people were in great alarm, seeing that they could not depart without their companions who were on the eastern side of the river, and that, only a few days before, sixty persons had been assassinated at a place on the western side, which he pointed to, and where I afterwards saw many skeletons. The report of this massacre had already reached me at Wed

Shelayeh. The murdered men were Gelabes, going to Sennâr, and were about to cross the river in the boats of the Shiloukhs, who, pretending that they required some repairs, detained the caravan till they had assembled a sufficient force to attack it, and then slaughtered the whole party, excepting two men who succeeded in escaping on a dromedary.

‘ Sheikh Idris answered all our questions frankly. He said that any Turkish army that might come would be stoutly resisted; the Shiloukhs being powerful, and the approach to their fortresses by land being through woods so close that they were almost impenetrable; while, by water, it was almost impossible, as the river a few miles higher up, at Merhada, the second island of that name, above Aleis, is only knee deep, in consequence of its great width. These words were a great disappointment to me; but I told him that there was no question of an army, none was coming, and that I was only a traveller who sought to be at peace with all the world. “ Ah, ha,” he replied, “ you are then the English ‘ cawague,’ of whom we have heard from merchants who have seen you.” To which having assented, I communicated to him my plan of pushing on to the residence of the king of the Shiloukhs, which greatly surprised him, although he allowed, that if I were once with the king I should be safe, and that if I had succeeded in catching a Shiloukh, according to my first idea, I might have traversed their country without much apprehension; but now that would be impossible; and he again assured me that my boat could not ascend above an island beyond Aba, called, like that below Aleis, Merhada; and that the residence of the king was five days’ journey higher up. As this man had no interest in deceiving me, and as the Fakir Mohammed and others had before said the same thing, I certainly was now discouraged; and while yet hesitating as to what I should do, the wind fell, and it became quite calm. I calculated that all the Shiloukhs within two days’ journey would be assembled the next day, and the day following would probably be at Aleis, irritated by the alarm to which they had been subjected, and willing to revenge it;—that having no one with me of their nation, nor even one who spoke their language, they would certainly take me for a Turk, and not spare me; and that, though we were enough to resist a small force, we could do nothing against an army. I determined, therefore, to return for the present, and to endeavour elsewhere to find a messenger to the king of the Shiloukhs, who might explain my objects, and obtain for me his protection. When I communicated this resolution to my people, they were delighted; and, by accident, the wind shifted to the south at the very moment.

‘ The old chief of the Gelabes approved much of my resolution,

and told me he had thought me mad when I proposed going direct to the king of the Shiloukhs; not considering that I did not know the country as he did, but wandered in the dark, with only such vague and contradictory notions as I was able to pick up among the Turks, who had even assured me, before I set out, that the river became both wider and deeper as it was ascended. He then intreated me to bring back his people who were on the other side of the river, where six of them were hid among the brushwood, with four camels; to which, as I was in some degree the occasion of their delay, I agreed. We went across therefore together, when he called to his people, and sent them to bring down their goods; as to me, I ascended one of several little heights covered with arbutus trees, which bordered the stream, and saw, at a little distance, the town of Aleis, which appeared to me of considerable size, and built like Sennâr, but chiefly in ruins, having been long since abandoned, except by some families who continue to reside here on account of the caravans which occasionally pass. I could easily have gone thither, but did not expect to find anything worth the trouble, as its few inhabitants were undoubtedly now fled; besides which, sunset approached, and I was anxious to profit by the fair wind for descending the river, as well as to increase our distance from the Shiloukhs, who when they knew that we had but one boat, might endeavour to overtake and attack us. Having landed the Gelabes and their chief on the western side, we departed, loaded with their benedictions; and, as I had foreseen that when the wind turned to south we should have a storm, we prepared to receive it. About eight o'clock, it struck us with such fury, that although we took in all sail we still went too fast, and in a moment afterwards the wind shifted to north, with rain. We then anchored, as it happened, precisely where we had hauled up the Shiloukh boats on the island the morning before; and all night long it blew strong, sometimes from one side, sometimes from another—towards morning setting in steadily from the north, and blowing strong.

‘*April 17th.*—We set off in the morning, and tracked down against the contrary wind. In passing the boats which we had left on the island, we observed that one was gone, and that the several articles which I had put on board of them were also taken away; from which I conjectured that the day before some Shiloukhs had been left on the island, but that now they too were departed. In proceeding down the river we observed that the bank on the eastern side was of a firm sandy earth, and the water near it deeper than on the other shore. In spite of all our efforts we could not reach the island Hassanieh that evening, but were obliged to anchor in the middle of the stream. Through the night we kept a good watch, and heard a great many lions, but only to the west. In

the water there were great numbers of hippopotami. About midnight it fell calm, and we immediately departed, using the oars.

‘*April 18th.*—By day-break we were almost at the north point of Hassanieh, where, the wind rising to a gale, we were again forced to track the boat down, and I profited by the opportunity to go shooting. I saw numbers of antelopes and wild cattle; among the trees were many varieties of birds, chiefly green parrots; the trees themselves were mimosas of different kinds, and the brushwood consisted, for the most part, of *nibok*, and of the sensitive mimosa with rose-coloured flowers, which produced a delightful effect, the plants being numerous and the flowers expanded. The banks of the river were also covered with a beautiful green turf, quite to the water’s edge.

‘In the afternoon we again set off; and although the wind was still contrary, and rather high, we arrived in the evening at the island of Douhem, where we remained till three o’clock the following morning.

‘*April 19th.*—Setting off at this time we soon reached the island Obeiha; but the wind then blew so strong that we were again obliged to halt some hours. As the day advanced it abated, and, at last, fell nearly calm, which enabled us to proceed rapidly with the oars. The thermometer rose in an hour from 75° to 101°, and the heat was very disagreeable, the air being heavy and oppressive. In the evening we stopped at the island Shebeshi, excessively fatigued; but no longer fearing the Shiloukhs, I occupied the time till midnight with the chase and collecting shells, of which there were many different sorts along the beach.

‘*April 20th.*—We set off early, and tracked down, the wind being again strong and contrary. We arrived before the *asser** at Madennelkell, and halted there: the natives, being Arabs, submit to Sheikh Nimmer, but they are stupid, brutal, very slightly obedient to the Turkish government, and have only a few superstitious notions of the Mahomedan religion. The Sheikh told me that he would get me some honey, and shortly afterwards sent a sheep; but, to my great surprise, a few minutes afterwards a man came and asked to be paid for it. I demanded of Nimmer what this meant; and reproaching him bitterly for his incivility, and the little hospitality which I had found among all the Hassanieh Arabs, I sent back the sheep. But the Sheikh of the village, the inhabitants, and the faquir Mohammed, urged me so strongly, that at length I agreed to accept it; after which, at night, they gave us a great feast, in order to relieve themselves from the bad impression caused by the Sheikh’s conduct. Their encampment was very

* [Time of the afternoon prayer.]

beautiful, under high trees, close to the river; and immense multitudes of birds, and monkeys who seemed to have taken possession of the huts as well as of the trees, enlivened the scene.

‘*April 21.*—Still tracking down against a contrary wind, we arrived, about mid-day, at Metta-tanna, where I was most happy to land Sheikh Nimmer, who had so infected the boat with his disgusting filth, that I passed the afternoon in having it washed out with sand and water. I offered him, on parting, a complete dress, according to the fashion of the country; but, although his own was absolutely in rags, he made no scruple in asking me for the value of my intended present in money. I did not stop longer at Metta-tanna, because Nimmer’s people were mostly absent at Tourah, an inland lake, formed during the inundation of the river, and where sufficient water is collected to support the flocks for a considerable time without bringing them down to the river. I was certain that I could thus learn nothing by remaining, and that, in particular, I should find no one here willing to go among the Shiloukhs.

‘*April 22.*—We set off early; and, as the wind was now N.E., and the current ran steadily to the N.N.W., we made considerable progress under sail, without much tracking. We arrived, in the evening, at the Island of Manieh, near Wed Shelayeh.

‘*April 23.*—About eight o’clock we arrived at Wed Shelayeh, when I went instantly to the Sheikh to endeavour to find some one to carry a letter to the Shiloukhs. But I still got the same answer as before; no one would incur the risk of such a journey. I learnt, however, that Rustan Bey, governor of Cordafan, and lately come from Cairo, was expected at Wed Shelayeh in a few days; and believing him to be accompanied by a French officer, a M. Cadeau, who had letters for me, I determined to wait his arrival. Otherwise I should have gone, without delay, to Missalemmieh, Obeid, or Sennâr, in order to send a messenger from thence to the Shiloukhs; hoping especially to succeed in this, through the means of Sheikh Ahmed Bedaoui, of Obeid, who is said to have frequent communication with the Shiloukhs.

‘*April 24.*—Meantime I crossed over to the eastern bank to look for a curious plant, called *tartousse*, which I had before seen, and which a man here said that he could easily find for me. But whether it did not exist at this place, or was not at this time above ground, I know not; it was not, at least, to be found.

‘Walking along the banks of the river, I saw on the sand the recent track of a very large crocodile; and thinking that possibly it might have been a female come ashore to lay her eggs, I followed up the track about twenty paces from the water-side, where the ground, appearing to have been much trodden, and recently disturbed, I dug, and found ninety-nine eggs. The

Arabs are in the habit of saying that ninety-nine is always the number of the crocodile's eggs; but I have found them of various numbers between sixty and ninety-nine. My people, and those of the place, immediately made a *fricassee*, which I tasted, but found very nauseous, having a flavour between rancid oil and musk. Each egg had considerably more white than yolk.

'Towards evening I re-crossed the river, and found Rustan Bey arriving, himself and his whole retinue mounted on dromedaries. As he alighted near my boat, I caused carpets and cushions to be spread for his accommodation, and invited him to visit me; but he would only take a cup of coffee, meaning to proceed instantly to Hartoum. He behaved with great frankness and condescension; talked to me on all sorts of subjects; and invited me to visit him at Cordafan after the rains, promising that I should have every facility to proceed thence wherever I pleased, and even, if I chose it, to accompany him into the Negro territory, where he proposed making some incursions. About sunset he departed, saying that he should only remain two days at Hartoum, and then return to Cordafan. He told me also that the Sheikh of the Cubabish had come to attack Sennâr, but was defeated;—all which gave me great pleasure. I was sorry, however, to find that M. Cadeau, who had my letters from Cairo, was not with the party.

2. Notes on the Bahr-Abiad.

'The Bahr-Abiad is undoubtedly the principal of the two rivers which form, by their junction, the Nile of Egypt. It discharges a greater volume of water than the Bahr-Azrek; and, although somewhat narrower immediately at the confluence than it is higher up, it is, even in this respect, equal to the Blue River. The colour of its waters is also that which characterizes the conjunct stream in the dry season, the Bahr-Azrek being then of a greenish hue, while the Bahr-Abiad is always white, and, as it were, soapy, even during the inundations, when the Bahr-Azrek becomes reddish, from the nature of the *detritus* brought down by the Bahr-Toumat, which falls into it in the province of Fasuolo. And the Bahr-Mogren, or northernmost branch of the Nile, also brings down, at this time, a quantity of black earth which influences the general colour.

'The waters of the Bahr-Toumat are very considerable during the freshes; but at other times they are so low as not even to flow. And it is said that when it begins to rise it does so with such force and violence as to carry every thing before it, the noise of its approach being thus heard at a consider-

able distance, and taken as a signal to escape from its banks with the utmost precipitation.

‘ Below the junction the general aspect of the river has much more of the character of the Bahr-Azrek than of the Bahr-Abiad; in every respect resembling the former as to the nature of its banks and adjoining scenery, its width, sinuous course, sandbanks, and the want of large shells, such as are only to be found on the shores of the Bahr-Abiad. Below, also, as along the banks of the Bahr-Azrek, there are comparatively few aquatic birds, while near the Bahr-Abiad these are innumerable.

‘ I have been unable to obtain any precise information as to the origin of the Bahr-Abiad, none but the Arabs, called Corouns, and the Wed Abrof, pretending to know anything of it. Hassan, the Sheikh of Fasuolo, a well-informed man for his country, and who has travelled a great deal in the adjacent districts, gave me, however, some particulars, which induce me to believe that it cannot rise in a lower latitude than Fasuolo*. For the merchants who go directly west from that province into the country of the Negroes, and those who traverse the countries south of Darfur and Cordafan, along nearly the same road, and in the same parallel of latitude, as the Coroun Arabs, the Bagarras, the Wed Abrof, &c. all agree in saying that they pass no river west of Fasuolo, excepting the Toumat and some slight streams which are nearly dry in the summer season; and that during the same season they have no water in their encampments along the skirts of the Ethiopic chain, which extends east and west a great distance, excepting what they find in the beds of torrents or among the rocks. When I asked them, also, why they did not rather follow the banks of the Bahr-Abiad, they always answered me that it passed a long way north of them; and that, beyond the Shiloukhs, it came directly from the western quarter.

‘ It is certain that, in the country of the Shiloukhs, there are other rivers which come from the west; and the following is a list of them in the order in which they are met in ascending the stream:—1. The *Nid-el-Nil*, or feast of the Nile, which passes close under the mountain called Guebel Dahir, or “mountain of the round,” so called because it is ascended spirally. (It is covered with Negro villages; is situated in the country of Tagalla; and the river, which passes to the south of it, is said to flow from a great lake to which I heard several names given, none of which I shall therefore cite; several other rivers are reported to fall into it, one

* [The journey of Ibrahim Kashef, mentioned in page 26, is adverse to this opinion; and not less so the result of the oral information obtained from Mehemet Bey, by M. Ruppel in Cordafan, the result of which is transferred from his map to the map accompanying the present paper.]

called the Bahr-Soudan)*; 2. the Suar; 3. the Hor el Karna; 4. the Serat; 5. the Hor el Nahal, besides some others.

‘ The Sheikh Hassan of Fasuolo also told me that south of the Shiloukhs the Bahr-Abiad is lost in some extensive lakes, which stretch away to the westward, and communicate with each other during the inundations, the intervening country being flat and marshy. And the remarks which I made on the stream agree well with this statement, neither gravel nor sand indicative of its being fed by torrents being found in it, and its shoals being all clay, proving that it does not come from mountains, but from a country of the same nature; or, at least, that if it does originate in mountains, it has a long subsequent course over a country of an opposite kind, whence its source cannot possibly be in the Mountains of the Moon, or, at least, in the place where they are marked in our maps. Besides all which, another remarkable fact seems to me to prove indubitably that it comes from a system of lakes; namely, the prodigious quantity of fish which arrive with the freshes at their first appearance, for these fish can only come from lakes where they remain imprisoned when the waters are low, and escape when the inundation takes place.

‘ At its junction with the Bahr-Azrek, as already observed, the Bahr-Abiad is not very wide, being not above eighteen hundred feet across; but, a little above, it enlarges much, its banks being frequently three and four miles apart, and in some places during the inundations, the waters extend twenty-one miles from side to side. It is said that they are specifically lighter and wholesomer for use than those of the Azrek; it is certain, at least, that the banks of the Abiad are much the more healthy.

‘ The shores of this river are very flat, especially on the western side; and the water is only deep towards the middle of the stream. On the western side the bank is composed of deposit from the river, without any sand; on the eastern it consists, on the contrary, entirely of a yellowish sand, not brought down by the river, but by the S.E. winds during the winter; and this, being stopped by the river, forms hillocks, which give this side a somewhat greater elevation, and the descent from it to the water a somewhat greater declivity than on the opposite shore. Hence, also, the water on this side is a little deeper.

‘ The rise of the Bahr-Abiad is not perceptible till some time after that of the Bahr-Azrek.

* [In a former journey of M. Linant, he was informed by some Takrouiri pilgrims from Dar Sille, that they travelled two months on the Bahr-Abiad before they arrived at Sennâr; that, before arriving at the Abiad, they followed the course of another river upwards; and that the Abiad had its rise in a country called Bahr-el-Lesse, from which some of the waters flow towards Marok; viz. Marocco, or to the N.W.]

3. *Journey across the District of Atbara in a Tour from Hartoum.*

‘ *Hartoum, March 14th, 1827.*—I left Hartoum on the 6th of December last, by water, and arrived on the 10th at Abou Aras, on the mouth of the river *Rahat*. The two Sheikhs who accompanied me, (of whom one was of the tribe of Shukerieh, the other a Bishari,) having had occasion to stop at several villages on the way, did not arrive till two days afterwards, nor my camels till the day after them. From Abou Aras I went to visit some ruins five miles lower down, and not far from the river (the Bahr-Azrek): they are of considerable extent, and formed of burnt brick; I saw no stone among them, nor any proof that they were ancient. I visited also some other remains, near the mouth of the Rahat, which were more interesting, being composed of unhewn stone, although none such are to be found within even a considerable distance; and none of the modern inhabitants of the neighbourhood are likely to have taken the trouble to bring them here for the purpose. The Rahat was then nearly dry, and its bed is very narrow near the mouth.

‘ On the 16th of December we left Abou Aras, and, on the 10th of January, arrived at Shendy. We travelled quickly, being all mounted on dromedaries, and the Sheikhs in haste.

‘ Atbara is a very flat country, with mountains scattered here and there, like stones placed on a floor. For the most part the soil is thickly covered with trees and grass, or grass only; and in the endless plains which we traversed, it was frequently impossible to select a single object on which the eye could rest, except, perhaps, some distant mountains, which seemed islands in the midst of a yellow sea, the wind moving the herbage, far and near, like waves. In other places we found desert plains, in which there is nothing green; although, apparently, the soil is good, and capable of being sown after the rains, according to the usual culture of the Shukerieh Arabs who occupy the country.

‘ I expected to find some antiquities at Mendera, both on account of its name, and position on the direct road between Meroe and Axum, and from what I had heard; but, on the contrary, it is nothing but a small mountain of blocks of granite, like others which I have seen in Atbara, covered with grass and plants which grow between the stones. It is the principal resort of the Shukerieh Arabs during the rains, and until the month of December; but when I passed they were just gone down to the river Atbara, water having here become scarce. Large cisterns cut in the rock had been described to me as existing at Mendera, but I found only reservoirs distributed round the mountain, and

hollowed out of the earth, so as to retain water for some time ; with two small natural basins, in which the water is confined by blocks of granite.

‘ From Mandera I visited Rera, the “fortunate place,” as its name imports ; which also is a favourite encampment of the Shukerieh, and consists of a chain of mountains, running east and west, several of them higher than Mandera, but, like it, composed of blocks of granite, separated from each other by ravines, clothed with beautiful trees, and having on their summits, sides, and at their feet, a number of natural basins, which retain the rain-water, and keep it fresh and cool even in the greatest heats. I here saw the remains of a wall which appears ancient ; it incloses a beautiful valley in which the Arabs encamp.

‘ From the relation of Burckhardt you already know *Gous Regeip*, so that I shall not now say anything of it ; but, as to the reported antiquities on the neighbouring mountain, be assured that nothing of the kind exists. On that mountain there are only blocks of granite, singular from the manner in which they are placed, and which the natives may possibly have mistaken for buildings. They are a retreat for robbers. At the top of the mountain a tolerably large natural grotto is formed of great blocks of granite, where these bandits place themselves, and see everything that passes on the plain beneath within a great distance ; they are in perfect safety also, provided they have a good stock of water, and the river is only about a mile distant. The Sheikh Goutal, an Adindao, not subject to the Pasha, having come to see me, I engaged him to take me to visit the mountain ; and as he was Sheikh of the robbers themselves, who are all Adindaos, they had the politeness to retire to the plain while I inspected their quarters, where I found nothing ancient, nor even wrought, except the tomb of a Mussulman saint, which they believe to be old. I was not laid under the slightest contribution ; but I made my hosts a present of a cow, with which they were delighted. And there the Sheikh of the Bisharis, of the Shukerieh, and the Sheikh Goutal, proposed to accompany me as far as the Bahr Abiad.

‘ I also visited the principal tribes of the Shukeriehs and Bisharis, whom I found, contrary to what I had heard, both friendly people. The Shukeriehs are handsome men, with fine countenances, tall, and not black, but like the Abyssinians ; the Bisharis are short, thin, and black ; the former are proud, but more polished and less debauched than the others ; the latter are affable, complaisant, lively, and gay. I collected, during this journey, some minerals, plants, and skins of birds ; and also made some astronomical observations ; but the time of my chronometer was deranged, I suppose, by the motion of the dromedary.

‘On leaving Gous Regeip I followed the course of the *Astaboras* for three days, and then turned direct for Shendy. Our road lay constantly across plains covered with grass, but on which there were few trees compared to the numbers I had seen near the banks of the Nile. We did not meet a single mountain, and only a few slight elevations, till within a day’s march of Shendy, when we came within sight of the mountain Colboshir, and those on which are situate the pyramids. They rise out of a large valley, in which are wells of good water, and in which, accordingly, a considerable tribe of Gehaleime Arabs encamp winter and summer.

‘The whole district of Atbara abounds in game, but especially hares, antelopes, and wild asses; I have frequently also heard lions. The wild asses are chiefly found below Gous Regeip; I have often seen twenty-five at a time, and antelopes in hundreds. The heat in the month of December was very disagreeable when we were exposed to the sun, and there was little wind; but otherwise it was cool enough; and we were even forced to halt two days on account of the cold, and light great fires to warm ourselves. The wind then came from the north, and blew strong.

‘All the country above Gous and Shendy is unhealthy, and even the Arabs fear it. As to myself, I sufficiently witnessed its effects. The Sheikh of the Bisharis, my soldier, and other three persons who were with me, of whom two were servants, and the other was an Ababde belonging to Sheikh Ralif, were all seized with severe fevers during the journey between Gous Rageip and Shendy: and the soldier, in particular, gave me a great deal of trouble (as, indeed, do most of those people when seized with illness), crying and shouting in despair, and wishing to be left behind. I was forced to act with firmness, and even to tie some on their dromedaries, pushing on constantly by forced marches. I was afraid of being taken ill myself, and, in fact, was seized the very day after arriving at Shendy.

‘Both my servants are now dead; and I have myself had a very long and severe attack, during which my spirits have been much depressed and my temper excited. I am told that these are usual symptoms of the complaint here, and that sometimes they reach even to madness. This year the epidemic has been peculiarly severe, whole villages have been depopulated; and the soldiers also have suffered much.’
